

K-648

Circa 1786-c. 1886

Site of Quaker Meeting House, Millington

Millington

Private

For almost a century a Religious Society of Friends' meeting house stood on the north side of Cypress Street, about halfway between the eventual railroad track and Crane Street. It was one of four sites in Kent County on which a Quaker meeting house was located. Known as the Head of Chester Meeting (indicating the early name for Millington), the group did not thrive but shrank during the nineteenth century due to removals, disownings, and the inroads made by Methodism. The meeting was "laid down" in 1840. All that now remains of the one-time Quaker presence there as part of the religious milieu of Kent County is a few gravestones that have not been removed to other places. A modern metal commercial building now stands quite close to the old stones, which may not be in their original locations.

city, town state

## 7. Description

SITE - NOT APPLICABLE

Survey No. K-648

### Condition

☐ excellent

☐ good

☐ fair

☐ deteriorated

☐ ruins

☐ unexposed

### Check one

☐ unaltered

☐ altered

### Check one

☐ original site

☐ moved

date of move \_\_\_\_\_

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

There is now no evidence of the old meeting house on the old lot that belonged to the Religious Society of Friends on the north side of Cypress Street, in the approximate center of the block between the railroad and Crane Street. A modern metal, prefabricated building built circa 1970 appears to stand on part of the lot. A few old gravestones at the rear-side, in an untended clump (possibly moved), are all that remains. It is said that descendants of some of the families buried there have removed their graves to other cemeteries.

## 8. Significance

Survey No. K-648

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1786–1886 Builder/Architect

check: Applicable Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D  
and/or

Applicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Level of Significance: ☐ national ☐ state ☐ local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

The Cypress Street lot in Millington was one of four sites in Kent County on which a Quaker meeting house was located. It was the last built, in about 1787. Though the group that met there never thrived, it did endure until 1840, when the meeting was "laid down." The few surviving grave stones that remain on the site are a reminder that the Quakers were once a part of the county's religious milieu that finally in the nineteenth century saw the Methodists and Episcopalians become dominant.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. K-648

Kenneth Carroll, Quakerism on the Eastern Shore. Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 1970.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle name \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle scale \_\_\_\_\_

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A 

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Zone Easting Northing

B 

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Zone Easting Northing

C 

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D 

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E 

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F 

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G 

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H 

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Verbal boundary description and justification

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Margaret Q. Fallaw, Survey Consultant

County Commissioners of Kent County

organization Historical Society of Kent County

date July 28, 1986

Courthouse

778-4600

street &amp; number Cross Street

telephone 778-3499

city or town Chestertown

state Maryland

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust  
Shaw House  
21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 269-2438

PS-2746

Quakerism came early to the eastern part of Kent County (then actually a part of Cecil County) but did not then endure. Quaker records show that a small group settled in the upper Sassafras River area in the 1670s and began to hold religious meetings. By 1690 the group ceased to meet in any formal sense. It was not until about 50 years later, in 1738, that there was a revival of activity in this part of the county. According to Kenneth Carroll, historian of Quakerism on the Eastern Shore, "In 1738 the Monthly Meeting appointed John Browning and Joshua Vanzant [Vansant] 'to take a deed from William Stoops for a certain parcel of land lying on the head of Swan Creek near the head of Sassafras River for ye use of a meeting house for the people called Quakers.'" By the next year a meeting house was built. (pp. 45, 123) The location of this meeting house is not now known. It appears to have been considerably south of the present Galena-to-Sassafras road, which though an old road (it appears in its approximate present location on 1860 and 1877 maps), was not always in its present location in its entirety. Two surviving old buildings (K-154 and K-156) now stand to the road's south, but their orientation was originally was toward not a road to their north but to their south. It appears that the eighteenth-century Quaker meeting property on Swantown Creek was later incorporated into the farmland of K-154, the "Cosden Murder House," or the Moody farm. The old meeting site would have been to the south of the present road.

During the eighteenth century Head of Chester (now Millington), at eight to ten miles away considerably to the south of the Swantown meeting, became an important crossroads town. In 1784 Quakers in that area, finding it too far to travel regularly to Sassafras Preparative Meeting, asked for permission to begin meetings for worship at Head of Chester. According to Carroll, "Early in 1786 Cecil Monthly Meeting appointed Gershom Mott, Oliver Caulk, and Joseph Wilkinson to receive a deed from Miers Fisher and Lydia Gilpine for a lot upon which to build a meeting house for Head of Chester Friends. After this was accomplished, the Monthly Meeting approved a plan to erect a meeting house '24 feet wide & 14 feet Long, with one Chimney & that to be outside.' By 12th month, 1787, the meeting house had been erected, and the Monthly Meeting was called upon to help defray the cost of this building. John Stewart and Daniel Lamb were appointed to make collections in Cecil and Chester Meetings toward the necessary amount. Cecil and Chester were each asked to contribute £12, and Sassafras, smaller and less able to give, was asked for £6. Members of Head of Chester Meeting were then encouraged to 'exert' themselves to pay the balance. The total cost of this Head of Chester meeting house was about £83." (p. 124-25) There is no record of the type of construction employed in this building, but perhaps the concern over the location of the chimney indicates that it was frame. It apparently was sited with its gable end facing Cypress Street, the road from Head of Chester to Delaware.

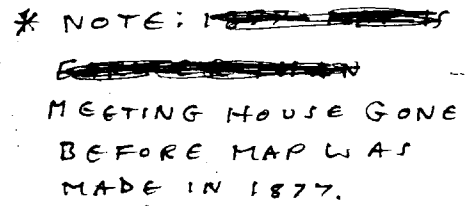
Membership in the meeting at Head of Chester never seemed to have been large. Some Quakers seem to have been swept up by the rise of Methodism in Kent County, and some married out of the denomination. Still others left (especially for nearby cities or to go west) or were expelled ("disowned") over the slavery issue or other transgressions. The total gain in membership  
(continued)

for the period 1800-1850 (without offsetting the losses) for all the Kent County meetings together was only 96--22 by application and 74 by transfer. (p. 183) The losses seem to have been greater than the gains. One notable family that endured at this meeting, however, was the Turner family that came to be the owners of Turner's Mill, the mill on the Andover branch of the Chester River (K-290).

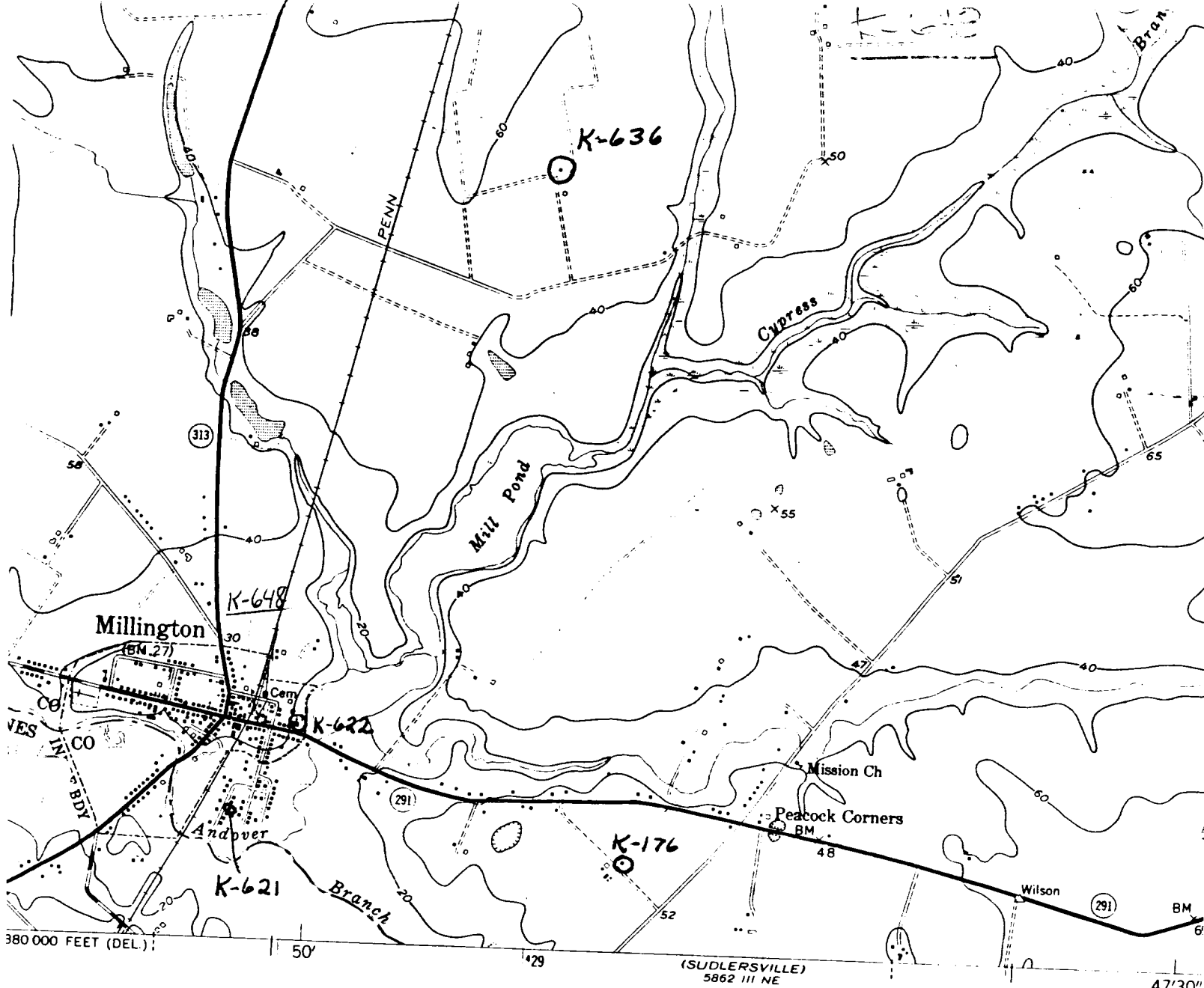
By 1800 the Sassafras Meeting was extinct as a separate entity. In that year the remaining Friends there asked for permission to cease meetings there and to meet with those at Head of Chester. The meeting house was sold to Robert Moody in 1804, who was told that he could remove the old meeting house. (pp. 181-182) This left three active meeting houses in Kent County: at Head of Chester (Millington), Chester Meeting in Quaker Neck near the present-day Johnsonstown community, and Cecil Meeting near Lynch.

According to Carroll, the "Head of Chester Meeting at Millington weakened early in the nineteenth century. As early as 1813 Friends there spoke of their 'reduced number.' Problems of discipline plagued these Friends at that time. James Rigby Corse gave way 'to passion so far as to enter the premises of Joseph Turner and beat his son Isaac Turner.' Isaac Wilkinson, James B. Needles, and others had to be dealt with in 1815. Other such cases came in the following years, with some of these being dropped from membership. A number of removals and some deaths of influential Friends combined to lead Friends to raise the question in 1839 as to whether they should discontinue Head of Chester as a Preparative Meeting. With Quarterly Meeting approval, Head of Chester was 'laid down' as a Preparative Meeting in 1840. Meetings for worship and use of the burial ground continued for some time. Richard T. Turner had the property refenced in 1866, and in 1872 he was asked to investigate ways of disposing of the property (except for the burial ground). The property was finally deeded to John Turner of Millington in 1886 after he promised to keep the burial ground always 'well-fenced.'" (pp. 183-184). The two remaining Kent County meetings (in Quaker Neck and in Lynch) also did not last beyond the nineteenth century. Chester Meeting had ceased by the end of the Civil War, and Cecil Meeting was "laid down" in 1900.

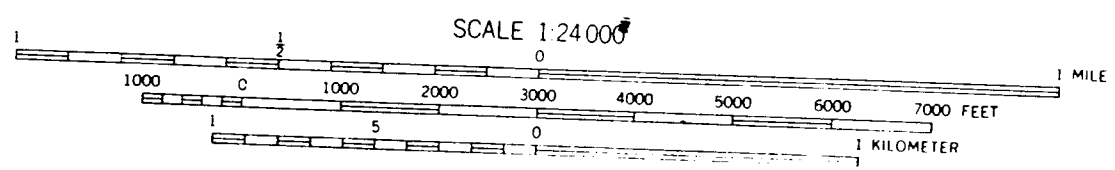
Martenet's 1860 map of Kent County shows the Millington meeting house as part of the row of buildings on the north side of Cypress Street. By 1877 the building evidently was gone as it is not shown on the atlas maps published that year. The long, narrow town lot stretching from Cypress Street on the south to Back Street on the north is shown only as the Friends' cemetery. By 1986 the one-time existence of a meeting house at the site is barely evident. A metal prefabricated building that serves now as a post office and furniture store is on the lot, and only a few grave stones remain at the rear, clustered to the side and perhaps relocated. Many of the descendants of those buried there are said to have removed their graves to other cemeteries, and others seem to have been lost entirely.







MN  
 GN  
 9 1/2°  
 169 MILS  
 0°31'  
 9 MILS  
 JTM GR10 AND 1973 MAGNETIC NORTH  
 DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET



CONTOUR INTERVAL 20 FEET  
 NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
 FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092  
 A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

# MILLINGTON QUADRANGLE